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antique relics possessing considerable interest, which had been contributed to the Museum of the Academy. He exhibited a model of an ancient spear-head (the largest he remembered to have ever seen), sent to the Academy by — Carruthers, Esq. The model was taken in lead, and was tinted so as to represent more accurately the original weapon, which is of bronze.

Dr. Petrie proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Carruthers, for this valuable model of a spear-head, which, Dr. Petrie was persuaded, was the finest specimen of the kind existing in Europe, as it was unequalled by any which had been discovered in Greece, Egypt, or any of the eastern countries.

The thanks of the Academy were voted to Mr. Carruthers.

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Dr. Petrie next called the attention of the meeting to a cast of an inscription on a pillar-stone preserved in the grounds of Mr. Gordon, of Newton, near Pitmachie, in Aberdeenshire, and which Dr. Petrie presented to the Academy on the part of Patrick Chalmers, Esq., of Auldbar, near Brechin, at whose expense the cast had been made and forwarded. Dr. Petrie observed, that he had been induced to request this cast for the Academy in consequence of his having discovered, from a similar cast preserved in the Museum of the Royal Society of Scottish Antiquaries at Edinburgh, that the stone bore a second inscription, not previously noticed, which was in the Irish Ogham characters, and which he thought it desirable to bring under the notice of the Academy; the more particularly, as two or three specimens of the same class had been recently discovered in Wales. Unfortunately, however, this cast did not embrace the entire of the Ogham inscription; but the inscription which it did present perfectly was one of great historical importance, and of no less interest to the Irish than to the Scottish antiquary, as it may be assumed to belong to the Pictish people, whose early history is so intimately connected

with that of the Irish, but whose origin is so involved in obscurity. This historical obscurity, which an interpretation of this inscription might remove, has been thus alluded to by Dr. Pritchard: "It may, perhaps, be impossible to settle the long agitated Pictish controversy; what those people were, whence they came, or why they were so called, were questions which, though frequently discussed, have never yet been accurately decided. Unfortunately, there are no remains of literature, not even a single sentence, and scarcely an ascertained word, preserved as a specimen of the language of the Picts."

Dr. Petrie, in conclusion, having expressed his hope that this inscription might find a successful interpreter in Ireland, proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Chalmers, for his kindness in presenting the cast to the Academy.

The vote of thanks to Mr. Chalmers was passed.

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The Rev. Charles Graves exhibited a drawing on a large scale of the inscription in the Ogham character which runs along the *side* of the pillar-stone at Newton. In consequence of its having been executed with less precision than is generally manifested in similar monuments found in Ireland, there is considerable difficulty in deciphering it; and, on this account, he was not yet prepared to submit his views respecting it to the Academy. A correct reading of the Ogham inscription is of the more importance, as a knowledge of its purport might help us to decipher that other inscription, on the *face* of the stone, of which Mr. Chalmers has presented the Academy with a cast, and which has hitherto defied all the efforts of antiquaries to ascertain either the language or the character in which it is written. Mr. Graves mentioned two circumstances which concur to render it probable that this latter inscription is in a character used by some of the Scandinavian people.

1. The posterity of Mac Duff, the murderer of Macbeth,

“were entitled to certain privileges, contained in a *Gothic* inscription engraved on a stone pillar.”\*

2. There occurs, in the inscription on the Newton stone, a character of very peculiar form, which appears in a Runic inscription figured by Goransson.† Unfortunately, that antiquary was obliged to leave the Runic inscription itself undeciphered, in consequence of several of the characters which are introduced into it being unknown.

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Sir W. R. Hamilton gave an account of the application of the calculus of quaternions to problems respecting the construction of a circle touching three given circles on a sphere; and of a sphere touching four given spheres.

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The Rev. Charles Graves laid before the Academy the following account of certain ancient Irish manuscripts in the possession of the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland.

“Being in Edinburgh for a few days last summer, I endeavoured to obtain access to the Irish manuscripts, which I had learned were deposited in the collection of the Highland Society. By the kindness of the Secretary, Mr. Hall Maxwell, I was allowed not only to see them, but to examine them at my leisure; and I now beg to submit to the Academy the following brief account of the contents of the more remarkable ones.

“At the period when the controversy respecting the authenticity of the poems of Ossian was at its height, the Highland Society undertook to collect oral and documentary evidence, with a view to throw light upon this vexed question. A vast mass of writings, most of them recent and of little value, but some of undoubted antiquity and importance,

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\* Johnstone's *Lodbrokar Quida*, p. 102.

† Bautil, p. 8, fig. 25.